

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the East Lake Sammamish Master Plan Trail Project?

The East Lake Sammamish Master Plan Trail (ELST) project builds an alternative, non-motorized transportation corridor and a multi-use recreational trail along 11 miles of the former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad corridor on the east side of Lake Sammamish, from Redmond to Issaquah. King County purchased the corridor in 1998, and opened an interim gravel trail in 2006. King County Parks has spent more than 10 years on master planning, design work and environmental review for this project, with ongoing involvement of a citizen's advisory group and in close coordination with the cities of Redmond, Sammamish and Issaquah.

What is happening on the East Lake Sammamish Trail?

The ELST is being designed and constructed in segments, based on budget availability.

- **Redmond Segment - NE 70th Street to 187th Avenue NE (1.2 miles) DONE**
King County Parks opened the first Master Plan trail segment in Redmond in November 2011, with a newly paved surface and a 77-stall parking lot between NE 65th and NE 70th streets.
- **Issaquah Segment – SE 43rd Way to Gilman Blvd. (2.2 miles) DONE**
Construction began in May 2012 and the trail re-opened in June 2013.
- **North Sammamish Segment – NE 187th Avenue NE to Inglewood Hill Road (2.6 miles)**
Design is now complete, and construction is anticipated to begin in February 2014. Starting construction at the beginning of the year will allow crews to work during dry weather, resulting in a more efficient schedule and fewer impacts to trail neighbors and users.

Why is this development project needed?

Paved multi-use trails with soft-surface shoulders have the highest degree of accessibility to people of all abilities and provide for a wide variety of uses. The ELST is currently an 11-mile "missing link" in a 44-mile-long urban regional trail corridor that will connect the Burke-Gilman Trail, the Sammamish River Trail, the Marymoor Connector Trail and the Issaquah-Preston Trail, linking Seattle to the Eastside and the Cascade foothills. The trail will provide greater access to recreation, employment, and retail in the cities of Redmond, Sammamish and Issaquah and provide a path for bicyclists, pedestrians, joggers, skaters and other users of all ages and abilities.



Paved trails such as the Sammamish River Trail shown above, provide greater access to people of all ages and abilities.

Why does it take so long to build the trail?

The segment in Sammamish will be the most complex and difficult to construct due to the narrow corridor, limited access, sensitive areas, close proximity to homeowners, and steep slopes along both sides of the corridor which require extensive grading and retaining walls to accommodate the wider trail.

How will the trail be improved and what will it look like?

Safety and accessibility are primary goals. The new trail will include a 12-foot-wide asphalt trail with 2-foot soft-surface shoulders that walkers and runners can use and a 1-foot clear zone on each side of the trail. The new trail will also feature improved intersections and crossing treatments. The project will improve trail safety with a wider surface and soft-surface shoulders as well as enhanced traffic controls, fencing, sight distances and drainage. Environmental improvements will include wetland enhancements, slope stabilization, fish-passable culverts and native landscaping.



Completed segment in Redmond

Will the North Sammamish section of the trail be closed during construction?

Yes. Safety is our primary consideration. Due to the extensive scope of work within the narrow corridor and limited access, the trail will close from 187th Avenue NE to Inglewood Hill Road. This allows the critical improvements to be done as quickly as possible and minimize the impacts to trail users and homeowners. While construction presents a significant temporary inconvenience, please understand that the improvements to the East Lake Sammamish Trail will benefit trail users for decades to come.

How will King County work with property owners?

King County will communicate with property owners regularly ahead of and during construction. Property owners will receive regular email updates during construction, providing frequent website updates, and newsletters at project milestones. Project staff are also available to speak with property owners individually. Please call our hotline at 1-888-668-4886 to receive a response within one business day.

What will happen to my [irrigation/fence/landscaping/retaining wall, etc] during construction?

King County will notify property owners well in advance of construction regarding encroachments on County right-of-way that may interfere with the project. Below is a summary of the notification process:

1. 90 percent design plans and specifications are available on the project website at www.kingcounty.gov/eastlakesammamishtrail. The County's public property line has been surveyed and staked and the centerline of the new trail marked to provide King County and homeowners a clear boundary of the trail corridor. Construction will occur only within the limits of County-owned property.

2. In late summer 2013 a certified letter will be sent to property owners with encroachments on the County's public property that conflict with trail construction. This is the best time to begin removing encroachments.
3. Once the contractor is on board early next year, the limits of work will be staked. Any encroachments that remain within the limits of work will be removed during the early stages of construction.
4. After construction is complete, property owners may apply for permits to build or plant within the King County right-of-way. Please check out our website (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits/info/start.aspx>) for the link to more information about the permit application process or contact Robert Nunnenkamp, Property Agent.

Why does the centerline of the new trail vary from the existing gravel trail?

The centerline of the paved trail varies with respect to the existing gravel trail, in part to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and streams, as required by local, state, and federal regulations. Other factors influencing trail alignment include the grades of intersecting driveways and general topography, which typically drives the need for retaining walls. The alignment balances these needs while meeting current safety requirements and development standards.

Will the stop signs that are currently on the gravel trail be removed?

Yes. The stop signs presently located along the gravel trail will be removed during construction and will not be replaced. Many homeowners who live adjacent to the trail have expressed concern about their safety and the safety of trail users if the stop signs are removed. Additional information about stop sign usage on the trail can be found here: http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/parks-and-recreation/documents/cip/ELST_FAQ_North_Samm_StopSigns.pdf.

What can we expect during construction?

Construction will include the use of equipment such as excavators, graders, compactors, trucks, pavers and other equipment.

How noisy will construction be?

The City of Sammamish noise ordinance limits construction to the following hours: Monday through Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturdays and holidays: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and no construction on Sundays. The contractor will establish working hours consistent with city regulations. During construction, there will be temporary, short-term periods of back-up alarms and engine noise from construction equipment.

How will I access my property during construction?

Access to private properties and driveways will be maintained throughout construction.

How will I access Sammamish Landing Park during construction?

Access to Sammamish Landing Park will be maintained via the East Lake Sammamish Parkway.

How much does the ELST North Sammamish Project cost?

The engineer's estimate for construction of the 2.6-mile segment is \$6.8 million. The final project cost may be influenced by the bidding climate and the cost of materials.

How is this project being funded?

Funding for the ELST North Sammamish segment is provided by the voter-approved 2008–2013 Open Space and Trails Levy (Proposition 2; August Primary Election 2007) and grant funding provided by the federal Surface Transportation Enhancements Program and the state Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

What's next?

Final design of the South Sammamish segment of the ELST, from Inglewood Hill Road to Southeast 43rd Street, will begin this summer. Construction of the South Sammamish segment is dependent on funding availability.

Trail Timeline*

9/1998 – King County acquired rail corridor
3/2003 – Published Interim Use Trail Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
4/2006 – Interim Use Trail completed and opened to the public
5/2010 – Published Master Plan Trail EIS
11/2011 – Redmond Segment completed and opened to the public
6/2013 – Issaquah Segment completed and opened to the public
2/2014 – Anticipated beginning of construction of North Sammamish Segment
Spring 2015 – Anticipated completion of North Sammamish Segment.

Future Phases

4/2015 – Begin construction of South Sammamish Segment A – SE 43rd Way to SE 33rd St
4/2016 – Begin construction of Parking Lot at Inglewood Hill
4/2017 – Begin construction of South Sammamish Segment B – SE 33rd St to Inglewood Hill
4/2019 – Begin construction of parking lot at SE 33rd St.

*Project timeline is subject to change and dependent on budget availability.

How can I learn more about the East Lake Sammamish Master Plan Trail project?

- King County offers several options to stay informed about the East Lake Sammamish Master Plan Trail project, including the project website at www.kingcounty.gov/eastlakesammamishtrail.
- Call the project hotline and receive a response within one business day - 1-888-668-4886.
- Find us on Facebook, too! “Like” King County Parks at www.facebook.com/iheartkcparks.
- Got a minute? Tell us what you think at www.parksfeedback.com.
- Follow our blog (<http://kingcountyparks.wordpress.com/>) for frequent updates about the East Lake Sammamish Trail and other King County Parks projects.